



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An Electronic Newsletter in Support of Statewide Interoperable Communications in Montana  
VOLUME 8 • ISSUE 16 • Sept. 28, 2012



## Public Safety Communications Highlights

- The *Heard Across Montana* (HAM) newsletter will be transitioning to a monthly format, with periodic special editions as needed.
- Bruce Brown, FBI Radio Technician, has officially transferred from Billings, MT to Las Cruces, NM. He has been a great partner on Montana's statewide radio system, and will be missed!
- Yellowstone County is wrapping up its Northeast Billings Planning Grant activities and beginning the process of bid letting for construction of the site.

## Dupuis Earns Excellence in Performance Award

On Aug. 16, Warren Dupuis, who serves as Chief of Staff to the State Chief Information Officer, was presented with an Excellence in Performance Award for taking on the duties of the Statewide Interoperability Communications Coordinator (SWIC).



He assumed these duties during a critical time in the development of the Montana Public Safety Communications System. Warren was instrumental in achieving the objectives Governor Schweitzer's executive order, which established the Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB), to direct the operation of the statewide public radio system formerly operated by Interoperability Montana.

As the SWIC, Warren oversees the daily operations of the state's public safety communications efforts under the guidance of the SIGB; establishes and maintains necessary governance structures; assembles working groups to develop and implement key initiatives, and maintains and implements the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan.

## Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB) Meeting Update

Program Status and SAFECOM Update: At recent meetings of the Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB), Warren Dupuis, Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), reported on the status of several projects, including forward progress on the eastern zone controller, trunking projects in the eastern and southwestern portions of the state, microwave projects in south central and eastern Montana along Interstate 94, a circuit lease with BNSF Railway, and progress on the Centennial Mountain site that is a partnership with the Chippewa Cree Tribe.

SIGB Technical Working Group News: Major Tom Butler, Montana Highway Patrol, briefed SIGB members on the status of the Hysham site and proposals to resolve a timing issue between the eastern and western zone controllers.

Roger Smith, Lewis and Clark County, continued to rack up miles over the past three months as he conducted maintenance and inventory work at 55 different communications sites across Montana's vast Public Safety Communications System. These sites ranged from King Mountain in Lincoln County in the west to Beaver Hill in Wibaux County in the east—some 700-plus miles away—and from the Sawtell site near the southeast corner of Beaverhead County to the Culbertson site in the northeast corner of the state in Roosevelt County, more than 500 miles away.

In August, the Technical Working Group met with Office of Emergency Communications technical assistance personnel to evaluate and validate future communications sites and trunking needs around the state based on priorities adopted by the SIGB.

SIGB Legislative Working Group News: Beaverhead Commissioner Mike McGinley, Chair, provided copies of a draft resolution that the Montana Association of Counties (MACo) will be reviewing as well as the draft language of a bill to codify the SIGB. Mike emphasized that public-private partnerships are key to future legislative success.

Next SIGB Meeting: It is set for Tues., Oct. 9 in Room 152 of the State Capitol beginning at 10:00 am. Here is the [link](#) for next month's agenda and meeting materials.

# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

## One More NECP Performance Evaluation Needed to Reach 75% Compliance

Only one more Performance Evaluation is needed from a Montana county to reach the Dept. of Homeland Security's Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) minimum compliance rate of 75%. This form, as well as a Communications Capabilities report, is needed from Montana counties to report state progress towards meeting the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP) Goal #2. Montana's compliance rate now stands at 74%, up from 68% on July 27.

A copy of the county Performance Evaluation form is available at this [link](#). Once completed, the form should be e-mailed to E. Wing Spooner, [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov). Anyone with questions is encouraged to call her at 406-444-2491.

Kudos are due to the counties and individuals listed in the table below who recently submitted their Performance Evaluations.

NECP PERFORMANCE REPORTS			
Compliance Rate <u>Last</u> Reporting Period: 68%		Compliance Rate <u>Current</u> Reporting Period: 74%	
County	Person Reporting	County	Person Reporting
Chouteau County	Linda Williams, DES	Teton County	Sheriff Keith VanSetten
Sanders County	Bill Naegeli, DES	<b>Compliance Goal: At least 75%</b>	

## Montana's Mutual Aid Narrowbanding Date is Here!

### *Mutual Aid Frequencies will Operate in Narrowband Beginning Oct. 1, 2012*

Montana's Dept. of Administration, Frequency Coordination Program, in cooperation with fire services, law enforcement and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Mutual Aid Advisory Councils, reminds the public safety response community that all Mutual Aid "color" channels will switch to narrowband operations at 12:01 am on October 1, 2012. Analog and digital operations will transfer from 25 kHz to 12.5 kHz or less on this date.

The FCC narrowband deadline is January 1, 2013; however, State of Montana agencies and the Mutual Aid Advisory Councils agreed to migrate by October 1, 2012 to allow for an efficient transition. The state and Montana's Mutual Aid System users will have a two-month window to troubleshoot any difficulties encountered.

The Mutual Aid "color" channels that will switch to narrowband operations include:

Frequency (MHz)	Color Name	Frequency (MHz)	Color Name
<b>General Use Frequencies</b>			
153.9050	<b>GOLD</b>	172.2250	<b>ALPHA</b>
155.3400	<b>TAN</b>	172.3750	<b>BRAVO</b>
157.4250	<b>NEON</b>		
<b>Law Enforcement Frequencies</b>			
155.4750	<b>BLUE</b>	153.8000	<b>BLACK</b>
155.7900	<b>SILVER</b>		
<b>Fire Frequencies</b>			
153.8300	<b>RUBY</b>	154.2725	<b>COPPER</b>
154.0700	<b>RED</b>	154.2875	<b>BURGUNDY</b>
154.2800	<b>MAROON</b>	154.3025	<b>CRIMSON</b>
154.2650	<b>CORAL</b>	159.3450	<b>GARNET</b>
154.2950	<b>SCARLET</b>		
<b>EMS Frequencies</b>			
155.2800	<b>WHITE</b>	155.3850	<b>PINK</b>
155.3250	<b>GRAY</b>		
<b>Search and Rescue Frequencies</b>			
155.1600	<b>VIOLET</b>	155.2200	<b>PURPLE</b>

Montana's Frequency Coordination Program reminds all agencies using frequencies below 512 MHz that all operations and licensing must be transitioned to narrowband by January 1, 2013, unless an FCC waiver is granted.

For questions about the narrowbanding requirement, please contact Scott Bradford at 406-444-2782 or [sbradford@mt.gov](mailto:sbradford@mt.gov). For more information, please visit this website: [www.fcc.gov/narrowbanding](http://www.fcc.gov/narrowbanding).

## Upcoming Meetings & Training Sessions

- **Thurs., Oct. 4: Northern Tier Consortium**  
 Havre • 10:00 am - 12:00 pm  
 Hill County Detention Center Courtroom Mtg. Area  
 1450 2<sup>nd</sup> St. West
- **Tues., Oct 9: Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB)**  
 Helena • 10:00 am - noon  
 State Capitol, Room 152  
[http://itsd.mt.gov/policy/councils/sigb/09112012\\_meeting.mcp](http://itsd.mt.gov/policy/councils/sigb/09112012_meeting.mcp)
- **Tues., Oct. 16: State Agency Radio Users Task Force Meeting**  
 Helena • 2:30 - 4:00 pm  
 Mitchell Bldg., 125 N. Roberts, Rm. 53
- **Thurs., Oct 18: I-15/90 Consortium**  
 Butte • 10:00 am - noon  
 Butte Chamber of Commerce  
 1000 George St.